



# International Communication Project 2014

## The Universal Declaration of Communication Rights

Communication<sup>1</sup> is the most fundamental of human capacities. People need to be able to communicate to fulfill their social, educational, emotional and vocational potential.

Barriers to communication impair an individual's ability to:

- relate to and interact with others;
- understand;
- learn, share and apply knowledge;
- achieve and maintain good physical and mental health;
- participate appropriately and safely in purposeful occupations and/or leisure activities; and
- have fair access to the justice system and other public services.

The opportunity to communicate is a basic human right. Everybody has the potential to communicate.

We, the undersigned, hereby commit to ensuring that people who have communication disorders<sup>2</sup> receive appropriate support. We also commit to ensuring that communication disability<sup>3</sup> receives deserving and appropriate attention and action from all relevant bodies and systems including:

- legislators and policymakers;
- funding bodies and insurers;
- medical, health, education, disability, aged and community sectors;
- consumer and advocacy groups;
- social care, justice and public services; and
- the media.

### Public Pledge of Support

We recognise that the ability to communicate is a basic human right.

We recognise that everyone has the potential to communicate.

By putting our names to this declaration, we give our support to the millions of people around the world who have communication disorders that prevent them from experiencing fulfilling lives and participating equally and fully in their communities.

We believe that people with communication disabilities should have access to the support they need to realise their full potential.

### Signatories

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association

Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists (Association canadienne des orthophonistes et audiologistes)

Irish Association of Speech and Language Therapists

New Zealand Speech-language Therapists' Association

Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists

Speech Pathology Australia

### Join Us!

Add your organization's support to this cause by becoming a signatory. Contact us at [info@communication2014.com](mailto:info@communication2014.com)

You can also make a personal pledge of support online [here](#).

<sup>1</sup>Communication is the exchange of information and meaning between two or more people. It involves vocalising, speaking, hearing, listening, expressing, understanding, social skills, reading, writing, and using gesture, facial expression, symbols and signs.

<sup>2</sup>Disorder/s, in accordance with the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF), refers to the impairment(s) and conditions that gave rise to the impairment(s).

<sup>3</sup>Disability/Disabilities may be a consequence of a disorder, depending on personal and environmental contextual factors. Disability refers to the cumulative effect of a person's impairments (or disorders), their activity limitations, participation restrictions, and contextual factors (i.e., environmental and personal). Communication disability or people with communication disabilities can be used to refer to individuals who are experiencing communication issues that impact on their ability to participate equally and fully in everyday activities.